



PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT

AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE

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USDA RELEASES NEW FARMERS MARKET STATISTICS

WASHINGTON, Dec 5, 2006 — The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced the number of farmers markets increased more than 7 percent between 2005 and 2006, preliminary results of a survey indicate.

The new numbers are based on an update of the National Farmers Market Directory by USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), and the preliminary results of the 2006 USDA National Farmers Market Survey, conducted by AMS in partnership with Michigan State University.

"These statistics show farmers markets continue to be an increasing source of income for our nation's farmers," said AMS Administrator Lloyd Day. "Their popularity with consumers is growing, and buyers enjoy fresh, locally grown products."

The updated directory lists 4,385 farmers markets currently operating in the United States, representing a 7 percent increase from 4,093 farmers markets in 2005. As a result of the strong growth in the number of farmers markets, total sales volumes are estimated at about \$1 billion for 2005, significantly larger than the estimated sales volume of \$888 million in 2000.

Average sales at individual farmers markets in 2005 totaled about \$245,000; average annual sales per vendor totaled \$7,108. Marketing opportunities at farmers markets were sufficiently favorable in 2005 that, on average, 25 percent of vendors from surveyed farmers markets relied on these markets as their sole source of farm-based income.

With the help of such USDA programs as the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Farmers Market Nutrition Program and the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program, farmers markets also provide low-income people with increased access to fresh foods. Fifty-nine percent of surveyed managers indicate their market accepted WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program vouchers, amounting to \$17,696 in annual revenue per market site in 2005. Forty-four percent of surveyed managers report their market accepted Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program vouchers, amounting to \$15,654 in annual revenue per market site in 2005.

The revised version of the National Farmers Market Directory can be accessed on-line at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets/map.htm>. AMS is also developing a final research report based on the 2006 USDA National Farmers Market Survey expected to be available in spring 2007.

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